

Fr. Karl Hoeppe, C.Ss.R. (1930—2014)

By MC Havey, Archivist

On the bright sunny morning of Father's Day, St. Patrick's church was filled with German hymns and hundreds in the congregation to bid farewell to Rev. Karl Hoeppe, who had served in the German parish for 50 years.

Provincial Superior Mark Miller along with Fr. Thomas O'Rourke and Maria Luxbacker, long-time secretary of the German parish, were at Fr. Hoeppe's bedside when he died on June 11th in Humber River Regional Hospital in Toronto.

With hymns sung by the German Men's Choir and the church choir, Fr. Miller presided at the Mass of Christian Burial with confreres and members of the Interprovincial Novitiate in the front pews.

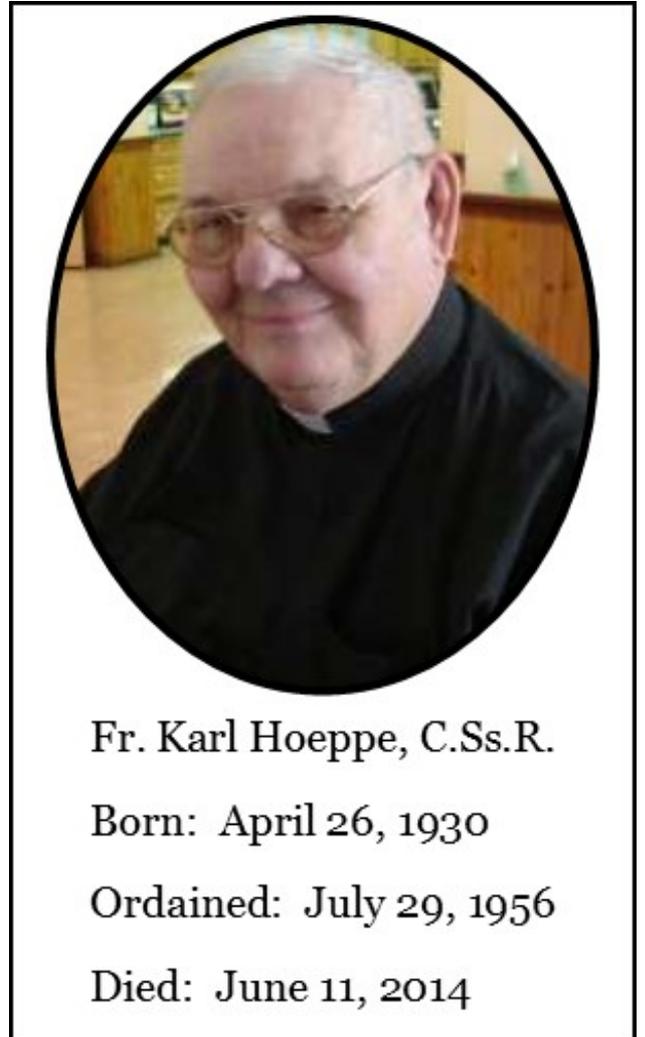
The Chancery Office of the Archdiocese of Toronto had given permission for the funeral to be held during the regular 10 a.m. Sunday Mass so the German-speaking community would have an opportunity to celebrate the life of Fr. Hoeppe.

Loaned to St. Patrick's German parish, he arrived from Germany in the autumn of 1966 as an associate pastor serving under pastors Fr. William Kroetsch and Fr. Karl Schlinder. Fr. Hoeppe joined the Toronto Province in June 1984 and was appointed pastor of St. Patrick's German parish in November 1994, retiring in September 2006, forty years after his arrival in Toronto. He continued to serve, travelling from St. Bernard's Residence in Toronto's north end, where he had lived for the last two years, to concelebrate Mass until a few weeks before his death.

The eldest of six children, Karl Oskar Franz Hoeppe was born on April 26, 1930 in Grulich, Czechoslovakia. He grew up in Grulich of the eastern and agricultural region of Bohemia, attending local schools. He entered the Redemptorist Novitiate in August 1950 at Gars am Inn, where he made temporary vows a year later. He studied at the Ordenshoschule seminary, Gars am Inn from 1951 to 1957, professing final vows on September 2, 1954 and was ordained on July 29, 1956.

After seminary studies, he was prefect of students at Maria Bickesheim (1957-1959) and prefect at Gars am Inn (1960-1962) as well as teaching religion to high school students at Riedlingen in 1960. Fr. Hoeppe had a series of appointments as associate pastor to parishes: at Forchheim (1962-1963), where he also taught religion at the local high school; at Schonenberg (1963-1964), where he directed pilgrimages and also taught religion; at Reidlingen (1964-1965) and at Stuttgart Botnang (1965-1966).

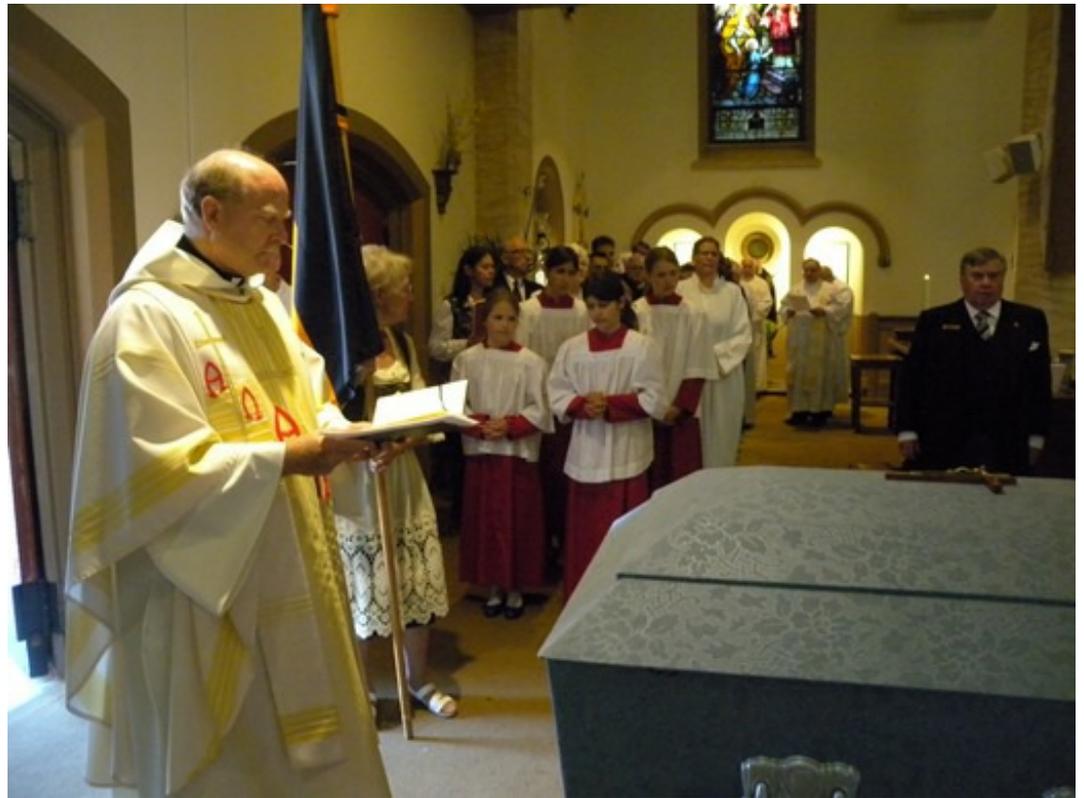
After an appointment to Wurzburg in 1966, he came to Canada. Among his many duties in the German parish, he was responsible for the operation at Settlement House with its day care programme and religious and cultural events for German Canadians. Presiding at the German Sunday liturgies, Fr. Hoeppe often made sure that the German choir was an integral part of the celebrations. Dedicated to the welfare of the German Catholic community, he was known for his pastoral care, especially to the sick and housebound.



Mrs. Luxbacher said in an interview with [The Catholic Register](#) that Fr. Hoeppe diligently looked after the sick, going to their homes, hospitals and nursing homes. "He was very kind to them."

Fr. Santo Arrigo, who took over as pastor of St. Patrick's when the German and English parishes merged in 2011, recalled Fr. Hoeppe as a quiet, gentle man who always had a smile.

After the Mass, Fr. Hoeppe's body was buried in the Redemptorist plot in Mount Hope cemetery,



Toronto.

